

Unalienable Right by jackwabbit

Category: Stranger Things, 2016

Genre: Friendship

Language: English

Characters: Robin, Steve H.

Status: Completed

Published: 2019-07-29 13:37:29

Updated: 2019-07-29 13:37:29

Packaged: 2019-12-12 16:52:03

Rating: K+

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,205

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

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Summary: Steve holds these truths to be self-evident: that not all parties are created equal.

Steve Harrington glanced at his passenger.

"Wanna hear it again?"

"Uh, yeah!" said Robin, giving him a sarcastic look as she laughed. "I love that song!"

Steve hit the rewind button on the car stereo as Robin clapped her hands.

"Yes! It is so good to be back!"

"Aww," said Steve, all sickly sweet. "Told you you'd miss me."

Robin snorted. "In your dreams, dingus."

Steve chuckled, but with only a little mirth, and when he spoke, his voice was quiet and sad.

"Yeah," he mumbled. "I know."

Robin sobered. "Hey," she said, snapping her fingers at Steve. "You know I'm kidding. None of that."

Steve shrugged. "Can't help it. I mean, I'm stuck here and you're off getting all..." Steve waved a hand in the air a few times until he

found the words he wanted. "...educated and shit."

"It's not a big deal."

"Says the one who made it out of Hawkins."

Robin pressed her lips together. She wasn't sure what to say to that. Just then, the tape deck clicked and started to play again, and the distinctive opening chords of the song filled the car. Robin reached out and stopped the playback, then half turned to face Steve.

Steve kept his eyes on the road, but he licked his lips and then swallowed nervously. When Robin gave him her undivided attention, he knew something big was coming.

"What?" he asked.

"You know you don't have to stay here."

Steve sighed. "Robin, we've been through this."

"I know," said Robin. "Money's tight. But we could work something out. I know a bunch of guys who need roommates."

"Yeah, me and the whole college thing doesn't exactly seem like a good fit."

"Steve, you won't know until you try."

Steve shook his head. "I... you know school isn't my strong suit."

"I'd help you."

"I don't need your pity."

"It's not pity, dumbass."

"Just drop it."

"No! I don't understand why you won't even try to get out of here when you say you hate it so much! And I know you're not as dumb as you look, so don't give me that shit!"

Steve sighed. "Robin... seriously. Will you just let me drive?"

Robin waved one hand at him dismissively. "Fine," she huffed, flopping back in her seat and crossing her arms over her chest.

Steve sighed again, then banged one fist on the steering wheel and pulled over to the side of the road.

Robin gave him a look, but didn't say anything as he turned off the engine, then turned to face her.

"You really wanna know why I'm not leaving Hawkins?"

Robin nodded.

"I mean, besides the fact I make minimum wage and don't have the grades for school?"

"Yes," said Robin. "I do. I know there's more to it. Even if you don't go to school, there's other stuff to do in Indy or wherever. And I've met your parents."

"Yeah," scoffed Steve. "Living at home isn't exactly paradise."

"So what is it?"

Steve looked away. After a moment, he sighed. He didn't look at Robin as he spoke.

"It's Dustin."

"Dustin?"

"Yeah," said Steve. "Dustin. And Max. And Mike. And Lucas. And even that little shit, Erica."

Robin closed her eyes in understanding. She could've smacked herself at her own stupidity. Once he said it, it was blatantly obvious.

"And with the Byers gone... and Hopper... and El..."

"Exactly," said Steve, quietly and with a little sniff. He was still looking out the window, like he was embarrassed or ashamed

somehow.

"Hey, it's ok," said Robin, reaching over and taking Steve's hand.

He finally looked at her. As his eyes met hers, she saw the slightest sheen of tears there.

"They don't have anybody else," he said. "I mean, the others have Joyce. And Jonathan. And Nancy now that she's there. But here, in Hawkins, there's nobody. Nobody else who knows, that is. And they're just kids."

Now it was Robin's turn to sniff and get teary-eyed. She nodded at Steve.

"You have to stay."

Steve nodded back.

"I have to stay."

His voice was thick with emotion, and Robin tightened her grip on his hand.

"At least for a while," she said.

"At least for a while," he repeated, enclosing her hand with both of his.

They sat like that for a long moment, neither saying anything. It was Robin who broke the silence.

"But maybe you could come visit?"

Steve perked up. "Really?"

"Yeah," said Robin. "You'd be a huge hit at the parties."

Steve's sat up straighter. "Parties?"

Robin nodded, a sly grin taking over her face.

Steve pretended to think it over. He stroked his chin and looked all

serious. "I think I could make that work."

Robin raised her eyebrows at him. "Maybe we should get some practice in, then, eh?"

Steve laughed, and Robin took that as consent. She punched the play button on the stereo.

As soon as the music started again, both Robin and Steve threw their heads back and started singing at the top of their lungs. Steve started the car when the song was over, and they listened to it twice more before they reached their destination.

Once they got there, they fought over what movie to rent, but in the end they settled on *Return of the Jedi*, because it wasn't checked out for once, because Steve's parents were out of town (again), and because what did a few stops on the way back to his house really matter, anyway?

Then they climbed back in the car, cranked up the same tune, and headed out.

Forty minutes later, they settled in on Steve's couch.

They had popcorn and sodas.

They also had four fifteen-year-old nerds and a sassy younger sister, all of whom had been introduced to the latest by The Beastie Boys.

What followed was, in short, a perfect night, and while it wasn't exactly typical, Steve Harrington would fight anyone for his right to this party.

A/N: Robin is set to graduate high school in the spring of 1986. The Beastie Boys released "(You Gotta) Fight for Your Right (to Party!)" on November 15, 1986. The 1986 fall semester at Indiana University (and likely most other similar state schools) ended on December 19. *Return of the Jedi* came out on VHS (coveted rental only) on February 25, 1986. Finally, Steve's dad cut him off. Duh. And the rest, as they say, is history. Because Steve Harrington is a god among insects, and Robin would understand why.